

**School & Library Network
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
July 26, 2000**

Members Present: Phil Lindley, Gary Nichols, Joanne Steneck, Greg Scott, Art Henry (for Barry Crommett), Barry McCrum, Bill Black, John Vedral

Members Absent: Reginald Palmer

1. Minutes. Minutes from the June 21, 2000 meeting were approved.
2. Task Force on the Maine Learning and Technology Endowment. The endowment has been funded at the \$50 million dollar level. Appointments to the Task Force are due by August 15 and the Task must hold its first meeting by August 31. Greg Scott will report back about appointments at the next board meeting.
3. Status of ATM. Field testing is continuing towards final validation for four new sites and the six pilot sites. Twenty-seven sites should be ready by September. The Department of Education has a new position that will be focused on professional development for distance learning.
4. Status of Federal E-Rate. Edna Cornstock reported that awards will continue to be made into August. \$2.884 million dollars had been awarded in Maine to date (compared to year one \$2.9 million; year two \$3.5 million). Edna also reported that consortia can file a technical plan for the entire consortia.
5. Issues Related to Implementing The Maine Telecommunications Education Access Fund.
 - a. Rule – Joanne reported that the rule was approved by the Commission on July 19 and has been sent to the Attorney General and Secretary of State for final approval.
 - b. RFP – An RFP will be issued by mid-August requesting bids to provide 56 Kbps, T-1, and Internet service to sites wishing to keep the same type of service they currently receive under the MSLN program. A Form 470 for these services will be posted. Schools and libraries will be notified about the availability of these offering and will need to file a form with the State Library/DOE indicating their interest so that a blanket Form 471 can be filed by the State Library/DOE by the close of the filing window (likely January/February 2001).

- c. Education Campaign – Department of Education/State Library will work on a mailing to go to all schools and libraries explaining the process. Schools and libraries will submit a letter of agency so that the DOE/State Library can act on their behalf in obtaining services. The mailing will also explain that sites can apply for E-Rate for other types of services. The Board will recommend matching state funds for these services. The amount available won't be known until after 471's are filed.
- d. Treatment of Libraries Not Eligible for E-Rate – Currently, there are 63 libraries that are part of MSLN that are not eligible for E-Rate. E-Rate requires that public libraries affiliated with another institution (e.g., hospital, museum, university), must have a budget that is entirely separate from the affiliated institution. Included in the 63 are the 16 county law libraries, proprietary college, hospital, technical college, university, college museum, and historical society libraries. It was agreed that some of the institutions on the list likely do not need the support (e.g., university). The Board also discussed instituting a process for assuring that the public can actually use the connection (requiring verification that they make the connection publicly available; accounting for number of public using the connection). It was generally agreed if the connection is publicly available, the support should continue; although it depends in part what full support would cost the MTEAF, which won't be known until after the RFP process is complete. It was agreed that this would be discussed further at the next meeting.
- e. Provision of POTS for Libraries – Under the MSLN program, libraries can obtain up to two additional business lines for \$12 a month. Currently, 171 sites (using 219 lines) take advantage of this offer. This costs the MSLN approximately \$50,000 annually (number needs to be verified for next meeting). Questions were raised about whether MTEF support was necessary since schools and libraries can receive an E-Rate discount for these telecommunication services. It was agreed that Bell Atlantic would provide numbers at the next meeting to determine what a typical library would pay if they received E-Rate for POTS. One issue that was unclear was whether the current \$12 monthly charge includes the SLCC, access charge, etc. This will be discussed at the next meeting.
- f. Training and Computers – At the last meeting, Linda Lord and Greg Scott agreed to put together a list of sources of funding for technology training available to Maine libraries and schools, beyond MSLN. Greg and Linda presented an extensive list of existing and potential opportunities. It was noted that Maine is in a particularly good position to apply and receive grants, both governmental and private, due to our extensive infrastructure within schools and libraries. There was general agreement that the Board needs to

determine what the cost of connections will be first before deciding on a recommendation for spending on training.

- g. "Innovative and Technologically Advanced" criteria – Gary Nichols, Greg Scott, Reggie Palmer, Ed Gomes and Linda Lord distributed a draft of a suggested definition of "innovative and technologically advanced projects." The statute requires 25% of MTEAF be used for such projects. It was agreed that this discussion would continue at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on August 30, 2000 at 10:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m. in the Commission's Conference Room C.